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## NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

22801 7590 01/28/2010

LEE & HAYES, PLLC  
601 W. RIVERSIDE AVENUE  
SUITE 1400  
SPOKANE, WA 99201

EXAMINER

KIM, PAUL

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2169

DATE MAILED: 01/28/2010

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/820,947

04/08/2004

Eric D. Brill

MS1-4502US

9717

TITLE OF INVENTION: SYSTEMS AND METHODS THAT RANK SEARCH RESULTS

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	\$1510	\$300	\$0	\$1810	04/28/2010

**THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.**

**THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED. SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.**

### HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

#### I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.

B. If the status above is to be removed, check box 5b on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or

B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check box 5a on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL, or its equivalent, must be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted. If an equivalent of Part B is filed, a request to reapply a previously paid issue fee must be clearly made, and delays in processing may occur due to the difficulty in recognizing the paper as an equivalent of Part B.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.**

# **PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL**

**Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: Mail Mail Stop ISSUE FEE  
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**INSTRUCTIONS:** This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 5 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note: Use Block 1 for any change of address)

22801 7590 01/28/2010

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Note: A certificate of mailing can only be used for domestic mailings of the Fee(s) Transmittal. This certificate cannot be used for any other accompanying papers. Each additional paper, such as an assignment or formal drawing, must have its own certificate of mailing or transmission.

## **Certificate of Mailing or Transmission**

I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

(Depositor's name)
(Signature)
(Date)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/820,947 04/08/2004 Eric D. Brill MS1-4502US 9717

TITLE OF INVENTION: SYSTEMS AND METHODS THAT RANK SEARCH RESULTS

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
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nonprovisional NO \$1510 \$300 \$0 \$1810 04/28/2010

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
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KIM, PAUL 2169 707-728000

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).

- ☐ Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.
- ☐ "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. **Use of a Customer Number is required.**

2. For printing on the patent front page, list

- (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed. 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE (B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY)

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent) : ☐ Individual ☐ Corporation or other private group entity ☐ Government

4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:

- ☐ Issue Fee
- ☐ Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)
- ☐ Advance Order - # of Copies \_\_\_\_\_

4b. Payment of Fee(s); (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)

- ☐ A check is enclosed.
- ☐ Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.
- ☐ The Director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number \_\_\_\_\_ (enclose an extra copy of this form).

5. Change in Entity Status (from status indicated above)

- ☐ a. Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27. ☐ b. Applicant is no longer claiming SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27(g)(2).

NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Typed or printed name \_\_\_\_\_

Registration No. \_\_\_\_\_

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

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10/820,947	04/08/2004	Eric D. Brill	MS1-4502US	9717
22801	7590	01/28/2010	EXAMINER	
LEE & HAYES, PLLC 601 W. RIVERSIDE AVENUE SUITE 1400 SPOKANE, WA 99201			KIM, PAUL	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2169	
DATE MAILED: 01/28/2010				

## Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b) (application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment to date is 494 day(s). If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the Patent Term Adjustment will be 494 day(s).

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

<b>Notice of Allowability</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/820,947	BRILL ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	PAUL KIM	2169	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Amendment filed on 28 December 2009.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-13,15,16,34,37-42,44-47 and 49-51.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some\*    c) ☐ None    of the:
    1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
  - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached
    - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.

**Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).**
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)</li> <li>2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)</li> <li>3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),<br/>Paper No./Mail Date _____</li> <li>4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit<br/>of Biological Material</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application</li> <li>6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),<br/>Paper No./Mail Date _____.</li> <li>7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment</li> <li>8. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance</li> <li>9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____.</li> </ol> |
|---|--|

/Tony Mahmoudi/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2169

Art Unit: 2169

### **EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Colin D. Barnitz on 15 January 2010.

### ***Status of Claims***

2. Claims 1, 37, and 46 have been amended.
3. Claims 14, 43, and 48 have been cancelled.

### ***Amendments***

4. The application has been amended as follows:

#### Claim 1

A system that ranks search results, comprising a processor executing the following components:

a ranking component that determines relevance of respective search results generated from a search associated with one or more of a Usenet, a discussion thread, a blog, an archived community discussion, or a chat room via multiple feature-based relevance functions,

wherein features of the relevance functions are based at least on one or more global thread properties comprising at least a thread depth defined over a thread comprising one or more messages that include at least a message core and a message body, one or more posting-specific thread properties and attributes of a person posting the messages, and

wherein the attributes comprise at least a number of posting per time duration, a number of newsgroups posted to and a number of postings that have no responses;

a function generator component that generates the relevance functions such that ordered search results are ordered based on their respective relevancies;

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wherein the search is selectively scoped based at least on a structure of the thread comprising the one or more messages,

wherein further at least one of the features is based on inferred labels on edges between an existing message in the thread and one or more of a parent or child of the message, and

wherein the labels determine a nature of a respective message in the thread and are automatically inferred from content of the one or more messages within the thread; ~~and~~

a thresholding component that defines a threshold for an acceptable relevance level for at least one of the multiple relevance functions to mitigate providing non-relevant search results to a user, wherein the threshold is dynamically adjustable to adapt to the user's response to returned results by raising the threshold when the user rejects at least part of the returned results with a relevance above the threshold; and

**wherein the threshold limits the returned results based on system level constraints.**

#### Claim 37

A system that ranks search results, comprising the following means stored in a computer memory:

means for determining relevance of respective search results selected from one or more of a Usenet, a discussion thread, a blog, an archived community discussion, or a chat room via one or more feature-based relevance functions,

wherein the features are based at least on one or more of global thread properties comprising at least a thread depth, one or more posting-specific thread properties and attributes of a person generating the postings, and

wherein the attributes comprise at least a number of posting per time duration, a number of newsgroups posted to and a number of postings that have no responses;

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means for generating the one or more relevance functions that facilitate ordering the search results based on their respective relevancies,

wherein the search has variable scope based at least on a structure of a thread comprising one or more messages comprising at least a message core with text of a single message within the thread and a message body including text of a plurality of messages structurally related to the single message within the thread, at least one of the features is based on labels on edges between a message in the thread and one or more of a parent or child of the message,

wherein the labels are automatically inferred from content of the one or more messages within the thread; **and**

means for defining a threshold for an acceptable relevance for at least one of the one or more relevance functions to mitigate providing non-relevant search results to a user, wherein the threshold is dynamically adjustable to adapt to the user's response to returned results by raising the threshold when the user rejects a portion of the returned results with a relevance above the threshold; **and**

**wherein the threshold limits the returned results based on system level constraints.**

#### Claim 46

A computer-implemented method comprising:

determining, by a processor of the computer, relevance of respective search results from posted threads comprising a plurality of messages, wherein the relevance is determined using one or more feature-based relevance functions,

wherein the features are based at least on one or more of global thread properties comprising at least a thread depth, one or more posting-specific thread properties and attributes

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of a person generating the postings, wherein the attributes comprise a number of posting made by the person over a specified period of time;

generating the one or more relevance functions that facilitate ordering the search results based on their respective relevancies,

wherein the search has variable scope based at least on a structure of the threads comprising the plurality of messages comprising at least a message core with text of a single message within a particular thread and a message body including text of a plurality of messages structurally related to the single message within the particular thread; and

defining a threshold for an acceptable relevance level for at least one of the one or more relevance functions to mitigate providing non-relevant search results to a user, wherein the threshold is dynamically adjustable to adapt to the user's response to returned results by raising the threshold when the user rejects a portion of the returned results with a relevance above the threshold; **and**

**wherein the threshold limits the returned results based on system level constraints.**

/Tony Mahmoudi/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2169